

**Amendments to and Listing of the Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A nickel electrode active material for alkaline storage batteries comprising a nickel hydroxide having a content of sulfate ions in a crystal of nickel hydroxide of 0.4 wt% or less, wherein the sulfate ions have been removed from the crystal of nickel hydroxide with an alkaline solution having a pH of 13.0 to 14.0, and the nickel hydroxide is in a spherical form with a mean particle size of about ten microns.

2. (Original) The nickel electrode active material according to claim 1, wherein the nickel hydroxide is a solid solution nickel hydroxide and incorporates at least one element selected from the group consisting of cobalt, cadmium, zinc and magnesium.

3. (Currently amended) A pasted nickel positive electrode for alkaline storage batteries comprising a nickel hydroxide having a content of sulfate ions in a crystal of nickel hydroxide of 0.4 wt% or less, wherein the sulfate ions have been removed from the crystal of nickel hydroxide with an alkaline solution having a pH of 13.0 to 14.0, and the nickel hydroxide is in a spherical form with a mean particle size of about ten microns.

4. (Original) The pasted nickel positive electrode according to claim 3, wherein the nickel hydroxide is a solid solution nickel hydroxide and incorporates at least one element selected from the group consisting of cobalt, cadmium, zinc and magnesium.

5. (New) The nickel electrode active material according to claim 1, wherein the content of sulfate ions is 0.2 wt%.

6. (New) The pasted nickel positive electrode according to claim 3, wherein the content of sulfate ions is 0.2 wt.%.